

F.R. Beattie

The Higher Criticism

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OR,

MODERN CRITICAL THEORIES

AS TO

*The Origin and Contents of the Literature and Religion
found in the Holy Scriptures.*

(Being a Paper read before the Brantford Ministerial Alliance.)

BY

REV. F. R. BEATTIE, PH.D., D.D.,

Pastor, First Presbyterian Church, Brantford ; and Author of "An Examination of the Utilitarian Theory of Morals," and "The Methods of Theism."

Published by request of the Ministerial Alliance,
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PREFATORY NOTE.

THIS Essay was read before the Brantford Ministerial Alliance, at one of its monthly meetings. It was received with favor by the Alliance, and is now published at its request.

It was hurriedly prepared in the few spare hours that were available, amid the varied and pressing duties of the pastorate. It makes no claim to be in any way a complete treatment of the very important subject with which it deals. Readers who are familiar with recent discussions in this field of Biblical study, will find in it nothing new. It is hoped, however, that others, who have not read much in this line of research, may find something of interest and profit in these pages. It will be a great satisfaction to the Author, if both classes of readers find in this paper anything to confirm careful, intelligent and conservative views regarding the questions discussed.

It need scarcely be stated here that these questions are of immense importance at the present day. They

are not confined to the study of the scholar, but have a place in much of the current magazine literature of the day. No minister of the Gospel can well afford to be ignorant of these critical theories ; and he should be able to estimate their real import very carefully.

If this little Essay, in its present form, gives to a wider circle of readers than it was first intended for, any aid in making this estimate, the author will be more than satisfied.

F. R. BEATTIE.

BRANTFORD, *Jan.*, 1888.

THE HIGHER CRITICISM.



BIBLICAL studies have always possessed deep interest for thoughtful minds. The sacred literature of the Holy Scriptures, in its origin, contents and purpose, has engaged more earnest and scholarly attention than any other literature in the world. We see this interest and attention alike in Rabbinical, Patristic, Scholastic and Modern times.

The questions most debated at the present day are critical rather than dogmatic in their nature. The discussions are literary rather than doctrinal; historical rather than theological. Soon after the rise of the modern school of literary and historical criticism, less than a century ago, we find its methods applied to the Scriptures. The books of the Bible were subjected to rigid scrutiny, and the results in certain quarters have been startling. We find, for example, Kuenen, of Leyden, in the second edition of his *Introduction*, published in English in 1886, alluding to Wellhausen's presentation of the Grafian hypothesis as follows: "In setting forth, in this treatise, for the first time, its complete and systematic, critical justification, I am no longer advocating a heresy, but am expounding

the received view of European critical scholarship.' This statement cannot but startle those who hold the orthodox views. If it be an idle boast, it is proper that we should know it. If it be a well-grounded fact, the sooner we understand it the better.

In Germany and Holland, it must be admitted, these radical theories do very generally prevail. Professor Curtiss, of Chicago, in a recent article, after giving a list of those who hold radical and mediating views, goes on to say: "Lachmann, so far as we know, is the only Old Testament professor in a German university who still defends the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch." This statement is, perhaps, substantially true. It is to be remarked, however, that while Delitzsch, of Leipzig, acknowledges himself, in a modified way, a supporter of the Grafian hypothesis, he does not accept all the consequences following from it. It may be added that König, of the same university, belongs to the conservative school of German critics. These radical views, specially those of Kuenen and Wellhausen, have been imported into Scotland by Professor Robertson Smith, and in a measure popularized in his writings. They cannot be said, however, to have really taken root in theological circles, either in Britain or on this continent. Still, they are set forth in various ways in our current theological literature; and some knowledge of these views, and of the manner in which they are supported, is of more than passing interest. An imperfect attempt to supply this in very brief compass will be made in this paper.

The subject before us lies in the wide and interesting field of sacred learning known as Bible Criticism, or Introduction. Biblical Criticism may be defined as that branch of historical criticism which deals with the books of Holy Scripture merely as literary productions. Under this very general point of view, it naturally divides itself into two great branches. These are usually termed Textual or Lower Criticism, and Historical or Higher Criticism. A brief explanation of each will enable us to mark off more clearly the topics of which we wish to treat.

Textual Criticism is that branch of the science of Biblical Criticism which undertakes to investigate and settle the exact text of the various writings of which the Holy Scriptures are composed. The exact text sought for is that which was originally written down by the authors of the various books. In seeking to discover this text, the various manuscripts of the Biblical writings are collected and diligently compared. The different readings in these manuscripts are carefully collated; and the date of their production, the kind of letters found in them, and other things, are taken into account for the purpose of getting as nearly as possible at the original text of the Old and New Testaments.

Textual Criticism also studies the several versions and translations of the Scriptures, and compares these with the original languages in which they were written. It also estimates the value of the numerous quotations of Scripture made in early and later reli-

gious writings, in order to obtain additional information as to what was the actual text of the original manuscripts. In this department of the science, painstaking and valuable work has been done by Scholz, Mill, Griesbach, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, and many others.

Higher Criticism takes for granted the results of Textual Criticism, and proceeds to enquire into the question of the origin, date, and authorship of the several writings. It thus lays its hands on the questions of authenticity and genuineness in regard to the books of Scripture. The character of the several books as to truthfulness and authority is investigated, and their value estimated partly by literary and partly by subjective tests. The validity of the alleged authorship of the different books is rigorously canvassed, and the traditional views are by no means held to be authoritative. The age of the sacred writings is also explored carefully, so as to settle the date of their composition, or of their final editing, as accurately as possible.

In addition to this, the Higher Criticism enquires particularly concerning the various sources from which the authors of the sacred writings obtained the materials for their literary productions, and it investigates critically the manifold features of style, idiom, and other characteristics of the several books of the Bible. This Criticism also scrutinizes the religious history and institutions of the different peoples alluded to in the Scripture narratives. In doing so, it deals

with a great variety of questions in philology, theology, and comparative religion.

The task which the so-called Higher Critic thus undertakes is, to answer such questions as these :—Are the sacred writings so well attested that we can rely on the truthfulness of the statements made therein? Are the authors of these writings candid and trustworthy men, well informed in regard to the matters of which they write? Were the real authors the persons whose names stand connected with the several books? What was the actual manner of the composition of the books in question? What were the dates, places, and circumstances of the writing of these books? Was the work of the reputed authors original composition, or reconstruction and editing of pre-existing materials? Did the development of the ritual of the Jews take place in the manner described in the present order of the books of the Bible, or must reconstruction be made in order to get the true view? What was the precise relation of the monotheism of Judaism to the idolatry of surrounding nations? Any writer, it is to be observed, who deals with these and all similar questions, may be properly termed a Higher Critic. In a general sense, therefore, he is a Higher Critic who discusses the questions above stated, and all other questions which, like these, lie beyond the simple text of Scripture.

Recent critical controversies, however, have narrowed the meaning of the term Higher Criticism, and have considerably modified the scope of its application.

On this account it has also received certain new titles which, in a measure, indicate its present aims. It is often known now as the Advanced or Newer Criticism, and as the Historical Criticism. Taken together, those who deal with the subject in a certain way are known as the Critical School, or the Historico-Critical School of writers. In a general way, but with no great accuracy, they are also called the Advanced or Rationalistic Critics. A host of writers in Germany and Holland, and a few in Britain and America, representing almost every possible shade of opinion, might be named here did space permit.

It is the Higher Criticism, in the sense of the Newer or Historical Criticism, which we have specially to consider in this paper. The peculiarity of this Criticism consists not so much in simply discussing these questions in a general way, as in dealing with them in a particular way, and under certain presuppositions. It is the *method* according to which these questions are treated, rather than the nature of the questions themselves, which marks the chief difference between the newer or higher critics and the ordinary critics. The main purpose of this paper is to state and examine this method.

This examination, let it be premised, can only be very general in its nature, for the field is vast and varied. There are, moreover, so many phases of opinion held by the Critics whose works we are to consider, that it is no easy task to cover the ground intelligibly in the brief compass of such a paper as this.

Thus we find those who may be termed Conservative Critics, who believe in hastening slowly along the new lines recently marked out. Here may be mentioned Keil, Delitzsch, Sach, Hävernicks, Hengstenberg, Ranke, Kurtz, Davidson and Briggs.

Then there are the Evangelical Critics, who hold more or less firmly to the simplicity of the Gospel. As representatives here, Neander, Tholuck, Dorner, Christlieb, Ebrard, Stier and Luthardt may be mentioned.

Again, we find a long line of writers who may be called Rationalistic Critics, who minimize or explain away the supernatural as found in the Scriptures. Among many names which come before us here we may mention, Semler, Eichhorn, Paulus, Ewald, Bleek, De Wette, Lupfeld, Wegscheider, Röhr and Henke.

Then, finally, there are the Extreme Critics, or those belonging to the Critical School proper, who adopt a certain historico-critical method, and pursue that method almost relentlessly in dealing with the sacred writings. Here we need only mention a few names, such as Knobel, Vatke, Hitzig, Reuss, Graf, Kuenen, C. Baur, Wellhausen, Kalisch, Nolke, (Strauss), Hilgenfeld, (B. Bauer), Colenso, and Robertson Smith. It is with the principles and methods of the last class—the Advanced or Higher Critics—that we propose to deal chiefly in this paper.

That the discussion may have some sort of order or system in it, we divide the subject into the following topics, dealing with each in a separate section :

- I. A Short History of the Movement.*
 - II. An Exposition of its Principles and Method.*
 - III. A Critical Examination of the Movement.*
 - IV. An Estimate of its Import and Results.*
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SECTION I.

HISTORICAL SKETCH.

In the early Christian Church but little was done in the way of careful criticism of the Sacred Scriptures. Almost the only writer who touched upon the literary and historical questions arising from a critical study of the Scriptures is Porphyry, who was one of the chief opponents of Christianity during the latter part of the third century after Christ. He sought to point out inconsistencies and inaccuracies in the sacred records. He critically examined the history of the Jews and of Mosaism, and dealt at length with the Book of Daniel, calling in question dates and authorship, and suggesting certain difficult things as to the mode of the composition of the Bible. In Porphyry we have, without the Church, an acute and learned man giving hints of those views which in modern times have developed into a positive movement within the Christian Church. The problems he raised demand attention, and are far deeper than the objections of Celsus and Julian.

In the latter part of the seventeenth century, we find Spinoza, a Jewish philosopher, and the father of modern Pantheism, entering upon some critical enquiries in regard to the Scriptures. In general he called in question the traditional date and Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, and he cast doubt upon the alleged historical antecedence of the Mosaic Law and Ritual as a definite code. In his treatise *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, published in 1670, Spinoza was the first to ascribe the origin of the Pentateuch in its present form to Ezra. Thus the formation of these books, usually regarded as the work of Moses, is due to Ezra, and they belong to post-exilian rather than pre-exilian times. Spinoza thinks it likely that Ezra wrote the Book of Deuteronomy first, and afterwards composed the other four books. His examination of the history and ritual points to the conclusion that the definite religious code of the Jews belongs to a later age than that of Moses and those with him. It is worth observing here the somewhat remarkable fact, that the great exponent of modern pantheism is also the author of that radical theory of Biblical Criticism which has recently produced so much controversy among scholars. This fact will become all the more interesting when we see, as we shall further on, that in recent times in Germany, modern idealistic pantheism, and radical views in regard to the questions with which Higher Criticism deals, come again into view side by side.

Soon after Spinoza, though in many respects op-

posed to him, we find Richard Simon, about the year 1678, who discarded the belief in the unity of the Pentateuch, and in its Mosaic authorship. At the same time, he allowed that there was perhaps a kind of legislative kernel of the Law which came from Moses. Mature Mosaism, however, he held, was a development only found complete in the days of Ezra and onwards. A few years later, in 1685, Clericus unfolded views much more radical and startling in their nature than those of Simon. He maintained that the Pentateuch and Mosaism belong to a much later date than that of the Exodus from Egypt; and he was bold enough to venture the assertion that it owed its origin to some Jewish priest, who lived soon after the overthrow of the ten tribes, perhaps about the year 588 B.C. With these writers the movement seems to have really exhausted itself for the time being, and for a while we do not hear much about it.

During the eighteenth century these critical theories, as well as the pantheism of Spinoza, were generally rejected. The attacks made upon the Christian faith during this century were philosophical rather than critical in their nature. Almost the only writer among the English Deists who raised questions of a critical or literary nature was Collins, about the beginning of the eighteenth century; and in Germany the beginning of the movement belongs to the close of the century. Collins examines prophecy, and seeks to show that Christianity rests on misinterpretations of Jewish prophecy by the Apostles of our Lord. His work is by

no means profound, and yet it is of historic interest in this sketch.

When, however, the idealistic pantheism of Hegel was popularized in Germany by Lessing and Goethe, about the close of the last century, we observe that attempts were made, at first in a timid and unscientific way, to reproduce the Esdrine or post-exilian theory of the origin of the Pentateuch. These radical opinions began to crystallize into definite form about the beginning of the present century, and in the hands of professedly Christian scholars.

In the year 1806, De Wette set forth the view that we must look to the time of Isaiah, in the eighth century before Christ and a short time before the Captivity, for the origin of Deuteronomy. For the other books of the Pentateuch and for the complete Mosaic system a later date, he said, must be assigned. Some time later, about the year 1830, two writers, both holding to the truth of the philosophy of Hegel, presented more radical and thorough-going views. Their names are Vatke and Leopold George. They asserted without any reserve that the whole legislation of the Pentateuch was post-Mosaic, and the major part of it also post-prophetic. They further held that Deuteronomy was written about the time of the Exile, and that it is the oldest, not the latest, book of the Law. The other four books, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers, were written after Deuteronomy, and subsequent to the Exile. These books, they further stated, are to be regarded as entirely mythical in their nature.

In the year 1833, Ed. Reuss, of Strasbourg, published similar views, only with much more elaboration of details. He reproduced the main points in Spinoza's Ezra hypothesis, and gave a more definite outline to the theory of a later origin of the Pentateuch and the Mosaic legislation. In Reuss we have the distinct commencement of those theories which in quite recent times have developed into the Advanced or Extreme Higher Criticism. His work is interesting on this account.

So far as the Old Testament is concerned, we find these views adopted by very many scholars in Germany before the year 1848. By degrees, during this period, the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, and the early rise of mature Mosaism, was discarded by the majority of Biblical critics. Only a few here and there held on by the orthodox view, and the work of the critics was carried on with but little regard for the inspiration of the Scriptures.

It soon became evident, however, that a similar mode of criticism might be applied to the Gospel narratives of the New Testament, and to the life of Christ. It was reasoned that, if the traditional views in regard to Moses and the Pentateuch could be reasonably called in question, the next step was to apply the same critical method to Christ and the Gospels. Accordingly, in the year 1835, just about the time that Vatke, George and Reuss revived the Ezra hypothesis, and suggested the mythological origin of the first four books of Moses, we find Strauss publishing his *Leben*

Jesu. This is in many respects a bold and remarkable book, and it produced an immense sensation in the world of theological learning. It soon called forth vigorous and able replies both from a dogmatic and historical standpoint. Perhaps the best of these are by Neander and Dorner.

No attempt need here be made to unfold at length, or to criticise in detail, the mythical hypothesis by means of which Strauss undertook to explain the historical Christ and the Gospel narratives. It is virtually an application of Vatke's mythical views in regard to the origin of the Pentateuch to the Gospel narratives of the life of Christ. It is also closely related on its philosophical side to the absolute idealism or idealistic pantheism of Hegel, and is really an outgrowth therefrom. According to Strauss, the real historical nature of Christ and the Gospels is rejected, and both are accounted for by the mythus, or mythical hypothesis, by means of which the origin and growth of religious ideas and rites are to be explained. This hypothesis assumes a general mythological tendency in mankind, and upon this, with little or nothing of historical fact to begin with, there is gradually developed, along the line of a general Messianic expectation, the idea of the Christ of history, who is not so much a real objective fact or person, as an ideal creation or personification. The Gospel narratives which contain the account of this development, rather than the history of an actual person, were not written, Strauss says, for several hundred years after their

alleged traditional date of origin. In this way time was given for the mythus to grow. This theory, it need only be added, has already quite exhausted itself, and it does not now exert much influence, nor find many adherents at the present day. It is now a mummy neatly embalmed.

We reach another important stage in the development of these critical views in 1847, when Christian Baur, the founder of the Tübingen School of criticism, of which Hilgenfeld is the present leader, elaborated his Theory of Tendencies. This Theory is based on Hegel's Philosophy of History, and consists in an application of the principles of that philosophy to the New Testament Scriptures. According to Baur there are in the New Testament two distinct tendencies; one Pauline and the other Petrine. The former was Gentile and universal, and the latter was Jewish and narrow. Then, later on, this school says, a third tendency arose, which is called the Catholic or mediating tendency, from which arose the Catholic Church, according to the evolutionary principles of Hegelianism. In this way the miraculous is eliminated, and the rise of Christianity explained in a purely naturalistic way. The origin of the different books of Scripture is explained by the fact that they were purposely written to support one or other of these tendencies, and their dates and authorship are given differently by the supporters of this theory. Thus the Gospels were written from 130 to 170 A.D., and the Epistles are arranged here and there in a most arbitrary way as Pauline, Petrine

or Mediating, as the writers please. One would almost suppose that Baur and his followers had been present when Christianity arose, and had even been looking over the shoulders of the sacred writers when they were penning their narratives.

Though the theories of Strauss and Baur are often classed together in a very general way, they are radically different. The root idea in the theory of Strauss is that of the *mythus*, while the main thing in the views of Baur is the *intention* of the author to write in support of a particular tendency or school. The former is an unconscious development, and the latter an intentional product. The views of Baur have been vigorously combated by writers in Britain and on the Continent, and they do not meet with much favor now.

During the last twenty-five years there are three names on the continent of Europe, and one in Britain, that call for special notice in any historical sketch such as this. These four writers may be taken as the present day representatives of that Advanced School of Higher Criticism we are considering.

The first of these is Graf, a pupil of Reuss, the Strasbourg critic. In 1860 he propounded what may be termed the negative critical theory of the Pentateuch. This theory is now generally known as "Graf's Theory," though some who followed him gave it much more definite form. As this theory will be stated more fully further on, we need not add anything more here.

The second name is that of Kuenen, of Leyden.

Kuenen is not a German writer, as is often supposed by English readers, but a Hollander, and wrote in Dutch. He adopted the theory of Graf, and with great wealth of learning and boldness of speculation, expounded it more fully. He is in some respects the most important writer in the Modern Critical movement, and is certainly an able scholar.

The third writer to be mentioned here is Wellhausen, of Greifswald. In 1878 he published his "History of Israel," in which he gave the Grafian hypothesis still greater completeness, and presented it in the form now generally current. This complete form is sometimes known as the Graf-Wellhausen Hypothesis of the Pentateuch and Mosaism. In general, this theory maintains a post-prophetic origin of the Mosaic Law, and a post-exilian composition of the Pentateuch. He assigns the whole to the eighth or ninth century B.C. Into the details of this theory we cannot now enter.

The fourth name we have to allude to belongs to Britain. Professor Robertson Smith was formerly a professor at Aberdeen, in the Free Church College there; but he was deprived of his chair some years ago by the Free Church Assembly, after an able and prolonged discussion. His articles in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* on "The Bible," and on "The Hebrew Literature" first attracted attention. Then his books, one on "The Pentateuch," another on "The Prophets of Israel," and a third on "The Old Testament in the Jewish Church," unfold his views at length. All that need be said concerning Smith's writings in this his-

torical sketch is that there is really very little that is new in them. All that Smith has done is to put into a good English dress the most matured form of the Graf-Wellhausen hypothesis, at the same time endeavoring to hold by the doctrine of inspiration. He shows abundant scholarship of a certain kind, but it is at best narrow and one-sided. This is very evident in his *Encyclopædia* articles, where he professes to give an account of the Bible and Hebrew Literature, and in doing so seems to assume that the only writers whose opinions are worth much are those who hold, as he does, advanced views on all questions of criticism.*

This sketch would be incomplete without some reference to the result of these radical views, and a statement in regard to the position of criticism at the present day. No one need regret that these theories have been propounded, for they have been instrumental in turning, during the last ten years, a degree of reverent and devout scholarship upon the Holy Scriptures that has perhaps never been surpassed. Judging from reliable statements made in various connections, there is in Germany at the present time a very considerable reaction against the radical views of the Grafian School, and a tendency to return to conservative ground in regard to the literary and critical questions round which the fires of criticism have been burning so fiercely for the past twenty-five years. Perhaps the greatest benefit has arisen among the English-speaking people, for the replies made to Robertson

Smith, and the great attention which the controversy he opened up turned to the literature of Holy Scripture have no doubt been productive of much good, if they have caused some evil. Any one reading the replies of Professor Watts, of Belfast, and Professor Green, of Princeton, cannot fail to be impressed with the force of what has just been stated. We need only add, that at the present time there seems to be a lull in the controversy which attracted so much attention a few years ago.

SECTION II.

THE PRINCIPLES AND METHODS OF THE HIGHER CRITICISM.

It has already been stated, in defining the subject, that the main feature of the later phases of the Higher Criticism consists in its *method* of dealing with the questions it discusses. In order to understand this method, it is necessary to know something of the principles or presuppositions upon which it proceeds. Our first task in this section is to state briefly what these presuppositions are.

In the first place, the Higher Criticism is closely related to, if, indeed, it does not in Germany spring out of, the philosophy of Hegel. We cannot here enter upon an exposition of that philosophy, which is either so profound or so indefinite that scarcely any

two men understand it in the same way. In general, Hegel's philosophy is an elaborate system of absolute idealism, which really becomes a kind of idealistic pantheism. It differs from the pantheism of Spinoza, in putting absolute reason in the place of the all-embracing substance. It also differs from the materialism of Spencer, in putting the *idea* of reason in the place of the unknowable, which lies behind phenomena.

It is striking to observe how pantheism and the Higher Criticism seem to run side by side. We find them together in the hands of Spinoza. They re-appear together again in Germany, in the movement of the last fifty years there. It can scarcely be a matter of mere chance that Spinozism and Higher Criticism are together in the seventeenth century, and that Hegelianism and Higher Criticism again flourish together in the nineteenth century. There must be some natural connection between the two things, which makes the statement just presented a well-grounded one, that idealistic pantheism in some form is really the philosophy which underlies the radical critical methods of many recent German scholars. Hegel's *Philosophy of History* is simply an application of his philosophy to the evolution of the history of the human race. The *method* of the Higher Criticism, in its advanced and radical forms, in like manner consists in applying the same philosophical principles to the facts of the record of a so-called divine revelation given us in the Sacred Scriptures.

It is admitted that some writers, especially those in

Britain, are not conscious of the philosophy which is involved in their *method*; yet in Germany many of the advocates of the radical critical theories are avowed Hegelians. Vatke, Weisse and many others could be named here; and, in almost every case, the influence of this philosophy can be seen.

Now, this *method* of dealing with the Scriptures can have no greater validity than the soundness of Hegel's philosophy; and it is worth while stating the fact here that Hegelianism is at the present day declining into a somewhat respectable old age, even in its German Fatherland. No doubt there is in it an attempt to grasp, by means of philosophy, a great truth; but Plato has in his system grasped that truth with a firmer and wiser hand than Hegel. As this philosophy is losing its vitality and youthful exuberance, we may expect to find a decay in the Method of the Extreme Higher Critics, and ere long to see the day when a more reverent and no less learned criticism will take its place. The dawn of that day is even now upon us.

In the second place, the Advanced Higher Criticism virtually sets aside the belief in the reality of the supernatural. The idealistic pantheism which underlies it is at the same time a system of evolution, or development, according to which all things, alike in the sphere of real existence and on the field of human history, arise or come into existence according to natural and necessary law. Hegel's system is as much a theory of evolution as that of Spencer, only Hegel takes the idealistic line and Spencer the materialistic.

Niebuhr, the historian, applied this principle to the history of the Roman Empire, and has given us the result in his remarkable *History of Rome*. According to this mode of treatment history becomes largely an ideal structure, rather than a faithful record of facts.

It is in much the same way that the advanced critics proceed to deal with the Scripture narratives, and to explain the manner in which religious ideas and institutions were unfolded among the Jews. They maintain that religious ideas, as well as national history, are developed according to mere natural laws of evolution; and they assert that the cultus of the Jews, as well as of other nations, arose and matured in the same purely naturalistic way. It is evident that the result of this view is to reduce religion in every form to pure naturalism; and so we find the Higher Critics generally proceeding with their work of reconstruction of literature and ritual under the presupposition that the supernatural has no validity. The unfairness of this attitude will afterwards be pointed out.

A third presupposition follows naturally from what has just been said. If the supernatural has no validity, then inspiration can have no place. If religion with its worship and literature be only a naturalistic growth, then a revelation with the features of inspiration and miracle is not required. If the evolution of religious ideas and life, and the growth of religious institutions be a purely natural and necessary development, there is no room for the miracle or for

inspiration in any form. Accordingly, we find the destructive critics, such as Graf and Kuenen, rejecting the notion that the Scriptures are inspired. They assert that the sacred narratives differ in no material respect from the Annals of Tacitus, or the History of Thucydides. Hence they proceed to treat them in the same way, and *as if* they were the same.

It is proper to remark here that not a few of the critics professedly hold by the doctrine of inspiration while pursuing their critical method. Robertson Smith took this position in the controversy which resulted in the loss of his chair in the Free Church College at Aberdeen. He strenuously maintained that the literary and historical investigations of the Higher Criticism did not interfere in the least with the validity of the inspiration of the sacred narratives. It is to be feared, however, that though those who hold this opinion seek to be more orthodox and reverent than those who reject inspiration, yet it is doubtful if they are as consistent and logical in their positions. It seems clear that, if the philosophy of the continental leaders in this movement be adopted, religion becomes mere naturalism, and there can be no place left for the supernatural in general, or for the miracle and inspiration in particular. Moreover, if we feel ourselves free to play, as it were, fast and loose with the historical facts, and chronological order of these facts as they come before us in the Scriptures, and to do so because of certain presuppositions held, then it does seem to be impossible to believe that these Scriptures are infallible and

authoritative. Reconstruction, such as the critics propose, of the literature and worship of the Bible according to subjective opinions, must destroy its objective truth and authority.

In the fourth place, the Advanced Higher Criticism proceeds upon the tacit assumption of a certain theory in regard to the origin and growth of religion. Not only does it hold to the evolutionary theory in regard to the religions of the world generally, but in respect to the religion of the Bible it likewise assumes that it proceeds naturally from a lower to a higher form. It was only by a slow natural movement that a definite monotheism was developed among the Jews, out of the generally prevailing polytheism of the surrounding nations. Thus the early form of the Jewish religion was Jahvism, which only in after ages, when disaster came upon the nation about the time of the Captivity, became distinct monotheism. It was in connection with the latter that the mature form of the ritual and worship at a single sanctuary appeared in exilic and post-exilic times. This assumption certainly needs much more proof than has been adduced by the supporters of the views of the extreme Higher Critics. It also overlooks what seems to be the historical fact, that the national tendency among the Jews was to depart from the strict monotheism of the Decalogue, rather than to rise from rude polytheism to Jahvism, and from Jahvism up to decided monotheism.

Having presented these four assumptions, we next proceed to unfold the *method* of the Higher Critics

more definitely. With these assumptions, which many of the Critics seem to regard as axioms, they undertake to set aside the historical nature of Mosaism, and to deny the traditional authorship of many of the books of Scripture. The real battle-ground is the Pentateuch and the Levitical Code, as it runs on through the Bible. If we understand their method of procedure here, we will have a good idea of what it is generally.

They take for granted, in different forms, what is known as the "documentary hypothesis" of the books of Moses. By this hypothesis is meant that Moses, or whoever was the author of the Pentateuch, had before him various older writings, and from these made a compilation. The names Jehovah and Elohim as applied to God have significance in this connection, as indicating different documents.

Assuming the truth of this hypothesis, the Critics further proceed to show that the original Hebrew text has been retouched and revised by many successive writers or revisers, before it reached its final form. As this process of revising and re-editing the literature was in progress, the ritual was also becoming more and more elaborate, and the worship at one sanctuary instead of many became gradually more and more definitely settled, till the eighth century or so before Christ, when things were matured generally, and assumed their final form.

The historical books are considered to be not very trustworthy records, and so some parts of the prophetic books are taken to be the earliest, and to give

the key-note to the rest. Ezekiel comes into prominence here.

In working out their theories the Critics adduce various linguistic and philological facts. They allude to features of literary style and the use of certain peculiar words, which go to show that the Pentateuch was of a later date than the time of Moses. Immense labor and a good deal of conjecture appears in their work along this line.

Various supposed omissions, repetitions, seeming contradictions and anachronisms in the various books of Scripture are pointed out, and inferences favorable to the peculiar views of the Advanced Critics are drawn therefrom.

It may be added, that much is made of the reform under Josiah, of the work of Ezra in connection with the restoration from Babylon, and of the prophecy of Ezekiel, especially by comparing the remarkable vision described in the closing chapters with the Levitical Code of the Pentateuch. In every case an effort is made to secure evidence in favor of what really seem to be opinions formed beforehand, rather than to reach conclusions based on the evidence.

In general, it may be further stated, that so far as the history of the Jews and their religious institutions is concerned, the Advanced Critics hold that the nation was at first in a semi-heathen state, having some rude ritual and sacrificial system. As to the God really worshipped by the people in these early times, it is held that He was a kind of "tribal deity" called

Jahve. This people gradually entered Canaan, and obtained a supremacy there ; and, after a time, more elaborate ritual and sacrifices are developed by the people. As time passes on, the form of worship and the Ceremonial Law is developed still more fully by self-seeking priests. These priests proceed to compile the historical books, and these books consist of a strange mixture of historical truth, of myth, and of legend. In this way the Levitical Code was developed, and the Pentateuch compiled by the priests who lived during and after the exile. Graf, Kuenen and Wellhausen applied this method to the Old Testament, and Strauss and Baur, with still greater irreverence, applied it to the New Testament, and the life of Christ in particular. The "Grafian hypothesis" regards the prophets in a purely natural way as the creators of the Jehovah of Israel ; and the "tendency theory" of Baur makes the Church the creator of the Jesus Christ of history.

The general results of this method of treating the Sacred Scriptures cannot be very fully or clearly stated in the compass of a few brief paragraphs. In the present summary we shall confine ourselves almost entirely to the Old Testament, which is really the battle-ground in this controversy. The Higher Criticism runs along two parallel lines upon this subject. The one relates to the sacred literature found in the books of the Bible, and the other refers to the Levitical ritual and the Mosaic legislation. In regard to both of these questions we cannot enter into detailed

discussions; a statement of results, rather, can only be given.

In regard to the Pentateuch, it is asserted generally that Deuteronomy is the book that was written at the earliest date. Of these books, Moses is the author of only from the twentieth to the twenty-third chapter of Exodus; and, perhaps, of only the Ten Commandments in Exodus. The import of even this admission, in relation to the views held by the Higher Critics concerning the early worship of the Jews being at several, rather than at one sanctuary, will be pointed out further on.

At the death of Moses there was no other part of the Pentateuch save the portions just mentioned. In regard to the way in which these books came to assume their present form, opinions vary. With various modifications of view as to details, it is generally held that there are three or four distinct elements in these books. Thus we find Wellhausen making the following division: First, we have the history of the Jehovist; secondly, there is the law-book of the Deuteronomist; and thirdly, the *priester-codex*, which consists of law and history blended together.

The history of these sources is given in the following way. The "documentary hypothesis," it is to be observed, really underlies the explanation given. Then the Jehovist is a combination of two documents, the one known as Jehovistic, and the other as Elohistie, on account of the names of God found in each. These two sources may have passed through a number of

redactions or revisions, before they were finally blended together into their present historical form.

To the four books thus produced by the Jehovist, the Deuteronomist added the book bearing that name; and at the same time he also revised the other books, making certain changes. Side by side with the blended work of the Jehovist and Deuteronomist, though independent of it, there appears another book, containing chiefly history and law, named the Priest's Code. In this the law was set forth in its historical framework.

As to the dates of these various writings, it is held that the Jehovist wrote soon after the division of the kingdom into Judah and Israel; the Deuteronomist did his work about the age of Josiah; and the *priestercodex* did not appear till after the exile. Hence, the whole of the sacred literature contained in the Old Testament came into existence between five and eight hundred years before Christ. The Pentateuch is thus made about seven hundred years younger than we have been accustomed to regard it.

The analysis of Robertson Smith is slightly different, and may be very briefly sketched. According to his view, we have, first, a writer called the non-Levitical Elohist. He was partly author and partly compiler of the so-called popular or historical literature. He wrote before the eighth century B.C. Then followed the Deuteronomist, who wrote about Josiah's time. He re-wrote the ancient ordinances of Israel. Then came a prophetic writer, who finally shaped the historical books after the fall of Jerusalem. Then there came

finally a priestly scribe, who wrote what Smith calls the Levitico-Elohistic documents, embracing most of the Levitical Laws, and large parts of Exodus and Numbers. These latter parts were probably completed by a writer and reviser who lived about the time of the exile or soon after. This analysis, though differing in some details from that of Wellhausen, agrees with it in maintaining a later date for the origin of the Pentateuch, and this is the chief thing in this controversy.

Passing from the literature to the ritual and legal system found in the Pentateuch, the Higher Criticism holds in general that this system in its fully developed form did not exist, and was not observed, before the exile. The Levitical system is subjected to a merciless criticism, with the view of establishing the position that Mosaism was not a revelation given at first in definite form to the people through one great Law-giver. Mosaism, it is argued, with its legal and sacrificial system, was rather an evolution slowly wrought out during successive ages in the hands of many persons; and its mature form is to be found, not in the wilderness of Sinai, but about the time of the exile, and in the hands of Ezra and those associated with him, rather than in the hands of Moses.

According to this view, it is assumed that the work of the Jehovist was composed before the Assyrian period of Jewish history; that the Deuteronomist was connected with the reform in Josiah's reign, when we read of the book of the Law being found in the

Temple ; and that the priests of a later age elaborated the Levitical Code into its latest form, as found in the first four books of the Pentateuch, some time after the Captivity.

Space forbids us following this exposition further. In summing up the results of the method of the Higher Criticism, we may add that it completely inverts the order of events, both in regard to literature and ritual, with which the Church has always been more or less familiar. The traditional or ecclesiastical view has generally been that Moses, who lived about fifteen centuries before Christ, wrote, with a few trifling exceptions, the whole of the Pentateuch ; and that the Law was given in complete form at the beginning of the Israelitish history, for the guidance of the people alike in civil and religious matters.

The Critics, however, set all this aside, and tell us, with much confidence and great show of learning, that the Church has been wrong during all the ages in holding the views just stated. They assure us that the Ten Words, or Decalogue, or at most a few chapters in Exodus, is all that Moses wrote ; that perhaps very little more of the Pentateuch was written before the time of Hosea and Isaiah ; that Deuteronomy belongs to the time of Josiah's reform, and that the other parts of the written law did not appear till after the exile. Hence the Law was really unknown prior to the days of Ezra and Nehemiah ; and Mosaism, with its tabernacle, priesthood, sacrifices and festivals, arose only in post-exilic times.

SECTION III.

THE THEORY EXAMINED.

With the very brief outline of the principles, methods, and results of the Higher Criticism given in the previous section before us, we now undertake the difficult task of examining, as carefully as we can, the soundness of the views thus sketched. Are the methods of these Advanced Critics valid? Must we accept their conclusions? Should we reconstruct our ideas regarding Biblical literature and Jewish institutions in accordance with these conclusions? Or, is this Criticism purely negative and destructive in its nature, and hence useless? Are we justified in rejecting its results as at least not proven, and should we await further investigation? Are its principles inconsistent with the current orthodox views in regard to the Canon of Scripture and the Doctrine of Inspiration? Such are the questions which now come before us.

It is no easy matter to make the examination we now undertake. So many lines of criticism open up that one scarcely knows how or where to begin. If we present some *general* considerations, and follow these with a statement of some of the *special* features of the theory, we may thereby be able to estimate its general tendency in an intelligent way.

In setting forth some *general* considerations bear-

ing upon the Higher Criticism, it is to be distinctly understood that we have no wish to deprive these Critics of due credit for their scholarly research. Nor would we ever dream of undervaluing the importance of intelligent and learned criticism of the Scriptures, and careful study of all the questions connected therewith. At the same time we cannot admit, what some of the Critics almost seem to assume, that nearly all the intelligence and learning belongs to them. Nor will we permit the Advanced Critics to insinuate that the orthodox critics are not scientific in their methods, and hence unreliable in their results. In all fairness we claim from the Higher Critics what we are prepared to allow them. And further, we claim that a critic may deal with the questions embraced by the Higher Criticism, and yet be quite reverent and orthodox in his views. We now present four general considerations.

The first refers to the relation between the methods of the Advanced Higher Criticism and the Doctrine of Inspiration.

We have already seen that many of the leaders in this critical movement openly reject the inspiration of the Scripture record. Between them and those who hold orthodox views in regard to inspiration there can only be direct antagonism. But many Higher Critics do not reject inspiration; and so they seek to maintain that the work of the Higher Critic and the doctrine of Inspiration are quite independent of each other. The work of the critic, they say, is purely literary in its

nature, and may be carried on apart altogether from any particular opinions regarding the matter of inspiration. In this way Robertson Smith contends for the rights of criticism quite apart from inspiration, and he maintains that the value and authority of the Scriptures as an inspired record are not injuriously affected even by his radical views in regard to the Canon, and the origin and authorship of the several books of Scripture.

Now, we are prepared to go as far as possible in vindicating the rights of criticism within certain limits, and we are prepared to allow the Scriptures to be subjected to any amount of intelligent, scholarly and reverent criticism. If we have good reason, as we think we have, for believing that the Bible is God's Word, we need not be afraid of any measure of proper criticism of it. If it be gold it will stand the fire. If the grounds of our belief in the Scriptures as the inspired Word of God are good, then we have really nothing to fear, even from the Higher Criticism. The Word of the Lord standeth sure. If, on the other hand, the ground of our conviction in the Divine origin and inspiration of the Scriptures be not a well-founded one, the Higher Criticism will do us a real service by showing us that such is the case. We are quite ready for the alternative here.

Our firm conviction is, that the Higher Criticism has a direct bearing on the doctrine of Inspiration, and on the opinions we must hold in regard to the infallibility and authority of the Scriptures. It is also our

opinion, after looking as carefully as possible at this whole subject, that the methods of the Advanced Critics do affect injuriously all proper views of inspiration. We are convinced that sound apologetic method requires us to hold that the proof that a book is credible and authentic in its contents, must precede our belief that it is inspired, and must form part of the ground of that belief. If, therefore, the advocates of the Higher Criticism play fast and loose with questions of authorship, date, sources and mode of composition, they certainly weaken the grounds for our belief in the inspiration of these writings. Even inspiration as a supernatural fact, must rest on intelligible and rational grounds.

If the Advanced Critics show that the Pentateuch or John's Gospel narrative was not written for several hundred years after the time that Moses or John lived ; and if it be asserted that those parts of Scripture were not written by Moses or John at all, but by writers in a later age, who forged the names of Moses and John in connection with their writings, what would be the result ? We would have books in our hands which we hold to be inspired, and at the same time the contents of these books are not true in every particular. If, therefore, we prove by the methods of criticism that a book contains what is not true, we do shake our confidence in the inspiration of its contents. Hence, we conclude that Advanced Higher Criticism in its methods and results does affect inspiration, and cannot be entirely separated from it. All who hold by proper

views of the Scriptures as the inspired Word of God must regard with a degree of suspicion the work of the advanced school of Biblical Critics. Those Critics who reject inspiration altogether have at least the merit of consistency.

A second general consideration relates to the assumptions of the philosophy which underlie the radical forms of the Higher Criticism.

It has been already stated that pantheism, in some of its phases, is involved in the radical forms of the Higher Criticism. To assume, as this philosophy bids us, that there is no need of the supernatural, or that there is no place for the miracle or inspiration in connection with the Bible and the Christian religion, is to assume far too much. The Hegelian philosophy in particular, with the idealistic pantheism and naturalistic evolution which it involves, is at least of doubtful validity. Hence, the critical theories built on this foundation can have no greater security and authority than this uncertain philosophy supplies. It is better to leave open, at the outset at least, the question as to what is the true philosophy, and to refrain especially from rejecting the supernatural till we discover what the facts of the Biblical records really demand, in order to their proper interpretation. It may turn out that, if we deny the supernatural, we are throwing away the key which alone will enable us to unlock the mysteries of the wonderful literature and religious system of the Scripture record. It is better to keep the key till we see whether we need it.

We can take this position without assuming any particular philosophy of the supernatural, or taking for granted any definite theory of the miraculous and of inspiration. We will thus avoid the accusation of assuming inspiration in order to prove the truth of the Bible, when inspiration itself may be the very thing to be proved. On the other hand, to shut out, at the very threshold of the enquiry, the validity of the supernatural is to make a radical and a needless mistake. This is constructing the problem to fit the solution we wish to have given, rather than finding the problem as it actually is, and seeking to solve it. The proper way to proceed here is, to look at the Scriptures as a record of facts or truths of various kinds, and to apply to them all the methods of honest and scholarly criticism at our command, so as to determine thereby what their nature is. If we find, as we believe we shall, that the Bible contains a true and faithful record of historical fact, and a presentation of profound truth of various kinds, these very features will go far to establish the fact of inspiration. In like manner, if we find the doctrine of Inspiration thus derived from the internal evidence which the truthfulness of the Scriptures supplies, necessary and adequate to account for the peculiar features of the Scripture record, the doctrine of Inspiration is further established, and the unique nature and peculiar authority of the Scriptures are emphasized.

A third general consideration relates to the soundness of the procedure of the Higher Critics when tested by the current canons of historical criticism.

The Higher Criticism professes to be exceedingly accurate and strictly scientific in its method of investigation; and it often indirectly accuses the criticism which does not accept its conclusions, of being loose and unscientific in the way it deals with the questions which come before it. It is worth while examining the higher critical methods, in order to see how their claims to great scientific accuracy will stand scrutiny. In doing so we shall state the generally admitted canons of historical criticism, and enquire how far these are observed in the work of the Higher Critics.

The first canon requires us *to avoid all groundless assumptions*. Any one who reads the works of the Higher Critics will be convinced that they abound in bold and groundless assumptions. These writers are far too ready to put the deductions of an obscure and doubtful philosophy in the place of reasonably reliable human testimony. They deal very largely in hypothesis, and seem to think that a series of perchances justifies their conclusions. We venture to affirm that there are no writings of the present age, professing to be scientific, that contain so much hypothesis and groundless assumption as those of Kuenen, Wellhausen and Smith.

The second canon advises us *to receive reputable human testimony with favor*. In regard to this canon, we find that over and over again the testimony of one sacred writer to another, and the testimony of the early and later Christian and Jewish writers to the Scriptures is ignored, or set aside as of no value; and

the mere opinions of the Critics as to how matters might or should have come to pass are put in its place with the calmest presumption. If human testimony has not more value than they ascribe to it, then history in any proper sense is impossible. Jewish history is a myth; Gentile confirmations of that history are of no value; and the line of historical testimony from Bible days down to the present is a mere ideal creation. Applying the same method to profane history, we utterly destroy it, and so we conclude that the Higher Critics are unscientific in their treatment of well-attested human testimony.

The third canon reminds us *that mere conjecture proves nothing*. A dozen conjectures will not make one fact, and a score of uncertainties will not make one certainty. Now, we are convinced that our friends of the Higher Criticism make far too much of mere conjecture, and that they fail to adduce sufficient evidence to justify the conjectures they make. On almost every page of Wellhausen and Robertson Smith we find the expressions, "altogether likely," "most probable," "it is reasonable to suppose," and other similar expressions; and then the matters to which these expressions relate are taken to be good evidence in support of their peculiar views. Any one writing the history of Greece or Rome after the same manner would be pronounced entirely unscientific and worthless as a historian. Think of early British history written in this way!

The fourth canon directs us *to go as nearly as pos-*

sible to the original sources for the evidence. We must not use second-hand evidence if we can get it first-hand; nor are we to stop at any particular age if we can go a generation or a century further back. It is here, perhaps, that the Higher Criticism appears weaker than anywhere else. Its supporters do not go back to the original sources of the literature and religious institutions of the Bible. They deal chiefly with the religion of the Jews as it existed in Judah and Israel about the eighth century B.C., when they find what they call its normal type. This normal type consists in a kind of semi-pagan idolatry, only imperfectly monotheistic, using images as a part of its cultus, and worshipping at many sanctuaries. This semi-pagan form of worship, they say, was evolved from still lower forms of religion, and in the time of Josiah and Ezra it was in process of those changes, which resulted in a higher and more definite form of monotheism. It would be far more reasonable and scientific to trace the stream back to its earliest source, and find out what the form of religion really was in the days of Abraham and Moses. The critics, however, render this task all the more difficult, because they assume that the record on these points is unhistorical; but surely it is a fatal error to allow a mere assumption to bar the way to a solution of the problems we are dealing with.

This line of criticism evidently tells severely against the bold work of the Advanced Critics; and it clearly appears that, with all their claims to scientific accu-

racy, they do not observe in any consistent way the laws which govern the enquiries of historical criticism in general. Their accusation of orthodox critics, that they are not scientific, is, therefore, an example of persons living in glass houses casting stones at others.

The last general consideration we adduce has reference to the origin of religion, and the evolution of religious ideas generally.

We cannot here go into the wide question of the origin of religion; but we are convinced that the assumptions on this question made by the Advanced Critics are destitute of any good foundation. Their view is that the growth of religious ideas among men consists in an evolution from a lower to a higher, by means of a purely naturalistic movement. This is held to be true regarding not only the great ethnic natural religions, but also concerning the religious ideas set forth in the Scripture narratives. They are all alike, and all natural.

This view, we are convinced, is not borne out by the facts of the history of religion among men. These facts go to show, that wherever naturalism has been left to itself there has been an evolution of a certain kind, but not of the kind these critics require for their theories. The evolution has been downwards or backwards, not upwards or forwards. We observe that men have gradually lost, age after age, definite monotheistic ideas, and that they have become more and more degraded in religion and morals when left to themselves. It is true that the Bible gives the account

of a progressive development in religious ideas; but it must not be forgotten that this upward growth is the result, not of natural evolution working from within by necessary law, or as the going forth of absolute reason, but of the overruling of a personal God who interposes, and whose interposition alone produces progress towards better things. Of few things are we more convinced than this, that so far as religious ideas and life are concerned, the direction of mere natural evolution is from the higher to the lower—from monotheism to polytheism; and that all upward tendency and attainment is the result of the reality of the supernatural, and of divine interposition from without, which makes progress from the lower to higher possible. The Higher Critics, therefore, assume too much when they assume the truth of natural evolution in regard to the origin and growth of religious ideas.

In the second place, we come now to consider some of the special features of the methods and results of the Higher Criticism. These special features are so many and varied that only the merest outline of the various points can be given; and they cannot be all even stated.

In the first place, we have the uniform tradition of the Jewish and Christian Churches to the Mosaic origin of the Levitical Code, and to the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. This tradition is a fact of history which cannot be done away with, and it likewise calls for an explanation. Is the explanation that this

tradition is a mere unfounded supposition the best that can be given? Has the Church been under a constant delusion in regard to this matter? Is not the so-called traditional explanation, which makes Moses the author of these early books of the Bible, the most natural and satisfactory one? The Higher Critics, in any case, are bound to explain the uniform tradition of which we are now speaking. Mere denial here will not suffice, for we have the facts before us. The historic line of testimony is difficult of explanation on their theories.

In the second place, later writings, such as those of Ezekiel, distinctly presuppose the Levitical Code. The remarkable vision described in the closing chapters is intelligible, and reasonably explained only on the supposition that there already existed a definite code and ritual such as we find in Leviticus and Deuteronomy. The very differences between the vision of Ezekiel and the Code of Leviticus still further confirm this view. The rebukes which Ezekiel administers have meaning only on the supposition that the Levitical Code was already known, and it was for violations of this that the rebukes are administered. Instead of finding in Ezekiel confirmation of the views of the Advanced Critics, we would discover therein much to justify the conclusion that the Levitical Code existed in connection with the first Temple, and that the Pentateuch must have been written long before Ezekiel.

In the third place, the observance of circumcision

and the Passover all along the history of the people of Israel is not easily explained on the theories of the Higher Criticism. To hold, as it does, that sacrifice and ritual did not exist in definite form till after the exile, can scarcely be reconciled with the killing of the paschal lamb, and sprinkling of its blood on door post and lintel. Moreover, the very history of the Jewish nation, and especially these repeated references to the Passover, must be entirely recast if we admit the advanced views of criticism. It is surely more natural to hold by the simple historicity of the narratives than to multiply difficulties by means of new conjectures. These institutions cannot be explained away.

In the fourth place, the absurdity of supposing that a law and ritual entirely different from what previously existed should spring up in the days of Josiah, and be foisted on the people without any warning, and without any word of complaint or surprise on their part, is surely very evident. Yet we read of no surprise nor complaint. Some of the faithful priests and scribes rejoiced in the discovery of the Book of the Law, and everything points to the existence of the Law, but that the people had fallen into idolatry and had neglected the ritual. The reform, and the manner of it, can be easily and naturally explained under the supposition that in the reformation under Josiah, that which previously existed but had been lost, was found and restored. The whole method of Josiah's reform—the way he proceeded, the spirit in which the people responded, and the nature of the description given of

it—all unite to discredit the views of the Higher Critics. They choose a difficult explanation when a simple one is at hand.

In the fifth place, the testimony of the Psalms is against the reconstructive theories of the Higher Criticism. Either the Mosaic origin of some of the Psalms, and the Davidic authorship of many of them must be given up, or the Levitical Code with its sacrificial system existed long before Josiah and the days of the exile. If the Davidic authorship of such Psalms as the fifty-first, the fifty-fourth, the sixty-sixth, and the hundred-and-eighteenth be admitted, we must reject the results of the Higher Criticism, so far as it holds to the later origin of the sacrificial code. And further, whoever wrote these Psalms, we find in them references to many things in the law and ritual which go to show that both must have existed previous to the writing of these Psalms. Thus we find the expressions, "Law of the Lord," "sacrifice," "sin offering," "burnt offering," "thank offering," "sanctuary," "hyssop" and "vow" all in the Psalms, and it is a very difficult task for the Higher Critics to reconcile this fact with their views.

In the sixth place, Christ in His teaching took for granted the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, and the early origin of the Levitical system. He refers to the books of the Old Testament as the word of the Lord. John quotes Christ as saying: "Did not Moses give you the Law?" Mark, in like manner: "What did Moses command?" Mark again gives Christ's

words: "Moses wrote." Luke also gives the same. John says again: "The Law was given by Moses." Matthew says: "Why then did Moses command?" Luke quotes Christ speaking of "Moses and the prophets." The Newer or Higher Criticism has not yet given a satisfactory explanation of this usage of Christ. Either Christ was not divine, and did not know the actual fact in regard to Mosaic authorship; or, if He knew and fell in with a popular delusion, His morality may well be doubted. We may surely be pardoned for accepting the testimony of Christ, rather than the conjectures of the Critics.

In the seventh place, much of the teaching of the Apostles is meaningless if the theories of the Higher Criticism are sound. If Moses did not write the books ascribed to him, and if the Levitical ritual and legislation did not assume its complete form till the time of Ezra, it is exceedingly difficult to understand references to these matters in Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews, as well as in apostolic words recorded in the Acts. The address of Stephen proceeds upon the supposition that both tabernacle and temple worship in definite form existed long before Ezra's days. Paul, in the tenth chapter of Romans, says: "For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the Law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them." In Galatians the date of the giving of the Law is definitely fixed as four hundred and thirty years after Abraham, and the whole argument of the Apostle would be destroyed if the advanced critical views be

admitted. Then the whole order of discussion in Hebrews refutes the assumption of a post-Mosaic origin of the Ritual and Law under which Israel was placed. Let any fair-minded man read Wellhausen or Smith and then read Hebrews, and he will be forced to the conclusion that either the Higher Criticism or the author of the Epistle is wrong. For our part, we prefer to accept the views of the writer of Hebrews, at least till the Critics adduce more evidence.

In the eighth place, we maintain that the history and doctrines, the literature and the legislation of Mosaism stands so closely related that they cannot be really separated. The doctrines are rooted in the historical facts, and the legislation is woven in with the literature in such a way, that if the history be not reliable then the doctrines are rendered uncertain. Impugn the history, and the doctrines must lose authority. Make the Mosaic legislation a gradual development, then the literature must be so reconstructed that it is no longer of authority. Leave both intact and we have the true view, and the best account of both. It may be safely said that no man could invent the Levitical Code, and so the account of its origin as given in the Pentateuch certainly seems the most satisfactory and reasonable.

In the last place, it is difficult to see any motive for the writers who finally revised the Scriptures forging the name of Moses to their compositions. And if they did so with the intention of deceiving, they were guilty of deception and dishonesty. All this

talk the Critics indulge in about "literary imposture" is, in our judgment, very idle talk. If they make out their case, they certainly prove too much, for they prove that the later authors were bad men, who forged great names to their writings. These and many such difficulties are obviated if we still adhere in general to the traditional, or rather the historical view, and at the same time leave a place and find work for a reverent and scholarly criticism.

From these and many other considerations which might have been adduced, we conclude that the question stands thus: The opinion that Moses wrote the Pentateuch, and that the legal and ritual system of the Jews arose in his time has tradition, Scripture testimony, and Christ's confirmation in its favor, as well as other Scripture facts and inferences pointing to the same conclusion; while the opinion that the Pentateuch in whole or part was written long after the age of Moses, and that the Levitical Code originated about the time of the exile, cannot claim any such testimony in its support. Very few Scripture facts or statements look in that direction; and there is no distinct statement from Genesis to Revelation which can be fairly taken to imply that Moses did not write those books which bear his name, nor promulgate the legislation which they contain. Such we take to be the state of the question, and with this summary we must close the section.

SECTION IV.

GENERAL ESTIMATE.

We have tried in the preceding pages to give a brief outline of the history of the Higher Criticism, to describe the principles and methods involved in it, and to examine these principles and methods as fully as our space permitted. Our endeavor in this closing section will be to give a general estimate of its results, and of the way in which we should deal with it, and treat its supporters.

In the first place, we may safely assert that the case which the Higher Critics seek to make out is *not proven*. We make this statement in the face of the claim they make, that their theories are no longer mere hypotheses, but the established conclusions of Biblical scholarship. Even though many able scholars may be reckoned amongst its supporters, we are convinced that some weight should be given to scholars of the present and past who hold opposite views. Moreover, as one has well said, "this is not a question which is to be settled by votes." The minority may after all be right. In any case, we conclude that their case is not proven, and we can well afford to wait for the production of further evidence.

In the second place, we do not admit that the bulk of the scholarship, and all the science is in the hands of those Advanced Critics. In reading their writings,

one is struck with the bold way in which they ignore all the so-called orthodox critics, and speak of their work as crude and unscientific. We feel like saying in this connection that the humility and fairness of the true scholar is not the prevailing virtue of the Higher Critics. And we also claim that the belief in the supernatural does not hamper the scholar in his work as a critic in the least. It is not necessary to take the ground of pure naturalism in regard to religion, in order to be scientific in the study of the Scripture records. Nay, true science demands that we take into account all the facts which come before us in any problem, and seek an explanation adequate to them all. We fear that in this connection the Higher Critics often transgress the code of true science.

In the third place, the work of the Higher Critics has done vast service to the cause of Biblical learning and evangelical truth. It has been instrumental in turning the attention of the learning of Christendom to the Scripture records in a way never before known since the days of Jerome and Origen. When the Advanced Critics entered on new enquiries or set forth new theories, the conservative critics followed them and examined their theories. The result has very generally been that the latter have remained in possession of the field, and the Christian Church and the cause of truth have been the gainers thereby. Any one who has read carefully Professor Watts' reply to Robertson Smith, will not have much difficulty in

deciding with whom the victory lies. We are thankful, therefore, for the work of the Critics, and have no very hard or unkind words to say of them.

In the fourth place, we may rejoice that after having been subjected to the fiercest fires of criticism, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments stand more firmly fortified than ever. The testimonies of the Lord are indeed wonderful. No other literature has been so sifted as the Scripture record, and none has stood the process better. We may be encouraged therefore, to apply the most rigid scholarship to the literature and institutions of the Bible. We may allow friend and foe to make the fullest scrutiny of the Book, assured that the foundation of the Lord standeth sure. The rational and the supernatural are not antagonistic, but in complete harmony ; so we need not fear that the interests of religion will suffer even from the results of these critical controversies.

In the fifth place, we do not close our eyes to the fact that the conclusions of Advanced Criticism are antagonistic to the essential principles of the Christian faith, as the Church of God had generally held it during all the ages. If the supernatural element is ignored or denied ; if Judaism and Christianity are natural developments ; if the Scripture is not radically different from other sacred literature ; and if the institutions described in the Bible are not essentially distinct from those of other religions, then the Christian faith is injured. It is of the utmost importance, therefore, that these views be very carefully examined.

Simple denial will not suffice; appeal to authority will not settle the questions raised, and a refusal to go over the ground again will never satisfy. Scholarship must be met with scholarship, criticism with criticism, and argument with argument. Reverent and devout learning should seek to cope with that which is irreverent and bold, and we have no doubt as to the outcome of the conflict. Ground has perhaps been lost in past controversies from a neglect of this counsel, and the call for earnest, humble, Christian scholarship is very urgent in this connection. The only inquisition into which we would desire to put the upholders of this form of Higher Criticism is that of earnest, enlightened, Christian scholarship. The rack and thumb-screw of devout and learned criticism will serve every purpose in the controversy.

In the last place, in regard to the general spirit of this Higher Criticism and the way in which it should be treated, I know of no better words with which to conclude this paper than those of an able living writer who says: "The critical craze of the last half of the nineteenth century is only more respectable than it is æsthetical. In its own proper strength it is not formidable. But it is possible for us who oppose it to endow it with an amazing power for mischief. All that is requisite to do this is that we proscribe its authors, and proscribe those who object to proscribe its authors. The leaders in this movement appear to be many of them serious men, of strong convictions, of great industry in matters of scholarship. They are

excellent stuff to make martyrs out of. They have the ear of the world, and to some extent deserve it. If we wish men to adopt their views as well as discuss them, we need only denounce them. For the purpose of concealing the weakness of their positions, no cloak would be better than that of violent accusation. By methods such as these alone can we make the impression that our orthodoxy is helpless before criticism of this kind, and conscious of its helplessness."

THE END.

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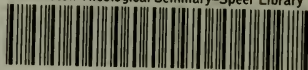
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